

## Civil society activities



### *Tribune about the Strategic lawsuit against Public Participation (SLAPP)*

Along with 99 other civil society groups, Justice Pesticides co-authored an opinion piece published on November 13, 2020 against Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPP). These lawsuits, which are increasingly numerous, are brought by economic stakeholders against activists or civil society groups who try to highlight the seriously damaging environmental and human health actions of companies. Their aim is to frighten individuals and associations, to drown them in legal proceedings so that their energy, time and financial resources are devoted to their defense to the detriment of the denunciation of polluting activities. In the field of pesticide use, two gagging lawsuits made headlines at the end of 2020. The Minister of the Italian province of Alto Adige (South Tyrol) and representatives of the fruit industry are [suing](#) activist Karl Bär and the German NGO Umweltinstitut with threats of imprisonment and fines, as well as potential claims for millions of euros in damages, for having denounced the heavy use of pesticides in South Tyrol, one of Europe's largest apple-growing regions. In the French region of Bordeaux, an activist for the *Alerte aux toxiques*'s NGO is being sued for "denigration of Bordeaux wines" by the Interprofessional Committee of Bordeaux Wines (CIVB), which is claiming more than €150,000 in damages, following the publication of the results of the analysis of 22 bottles of wine, all of which contained residues of dangerous pesticides, although most of these wines are labelled HVE (High Environmental Value). The Op-ed, published in 11 European newspapers, including *Le Monde* in France, calls for European legislation against "this hole in democracy" of abusive legal actions.